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ABSTRACT

Institutional racism is responsible for the high Hispanic dropout rate in Michigan. The term "pushout" is more appropriate than "dropout" for these students who are systematically ignored and devalued until they become alienated and leave school. Negative expectations are broadcast to Hispanic American students as soon as they enter elementary school, where they are ignored in the classroom and placed in low-ability groups and their parents are discouraged from participation. The process of disengagement begins in middle and junior high school, when the self-image is buffeted by a conscious awareness that teachers do not care about them. The sense of alienation deepens in high school and participation in academic and extracurricular activities decreases rapidly. More Hispanics are victimized in high school Spanish classes, where their language ability is denigrated, than in any other single class. Recommendations for improvement are based on an ongoing inservice training program for all school personnel and the active involvement of Hispanic parents. The following materials are appended: (1) a proposed state plan for reversing the Hispanic student dropout rate in Michigan; (2) a fact sheet on the Hispanic educational experience; (3) a checklist for evaluating a school's multiethnic orientation; and (4) a list of 29 references. (FMW)

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# RACISM AND THE HISPANIC HIGH SCHOOL DROPOUT

A Paper Prepared for the
Education / Youth Subcommittee of the
HISPANIC AGENDA TASK FORCE OF MICHIGAN

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*Omni*: Aspira, a Hispanic advocacy group in New York City, reports that in American schools, "Hispanics are given a message: Your culture is not good enough; your language stinks; you have to adjust to our culture." And the Commission of Black New Yorkers issued the statement, "Many black students, confronted with an educational system that devalues their culture and does not expect them to achieve, have opted to leave the system." The high-school dropout rate of blacks, Alaskan natives, Native Americans, and Hispanics is about thirty-five percent. That's an alarming rate.

Freire: I say to myself: How can this be possible in a modernized society like yours? It's a tragedy, no? Aren't these dropout rates an example of an immense contradiction in your society? No one seems to realize we are working against the kids, against the possibility that they will learn and, in learning, believe in themselves. It's interesting to consider the expulsion as a triumph, not a failure, of the student. If students are constantly repressed, if schools negate their day-to-day life experience, their language and culture, they resist by refusing to learn the word of the teacher, the curriculum, the wider culture. In a sense they are reaffirming their own words and perceptions of life.

"Interview: Paulo Freire"
by Murray Cox.
Omni, April 1990, 74-79, 93-94.

FORWARD

This paper is the result of a charge by the Hispanic Agenda Task force Of Michigan. The subcommittee on Youth and Education chose the problem of "dropouts" as its single area of concentration since that is the most pressing problem confronting Hispanic youth today. This paper is the result of research conducted during the past year. Appendix I consists of The Proposal, which is a structured plan to be presented to the State Board of Education.

The dropout problem in America is not new; there have always been dropouts in American public education. At the turn of the century only 10% of students graduated from high school; in 1940 the graduation rate had climbed to a mere 25%. In those times, however, the economy easily absorbed dropouts into low- or non-skilled employment. In the 1980s and 1990s that is no longer the case; youth leaving school today can look forward to poverty, welfare, prisons, and meaningless menial jobs -- if indeed there are any jobs at all. For most, leaving school will be an almost irreversible dead end, a no-win situation -- for the individual, the community, and the nation as well.

The term "dropout" is a misnomer that places blame totally on the student; "pushout" is a more appropriate term if only to place blame on the educational system; "pullout" is appropriate when students are forced to leave for economic or other reasons beyond their control. To use all three in a hyphenated fashion is most appropriate since it covers all possibilities without exclusion and does not imply race, ethnicity, class or sex, although again the emphasis is on the student. The term "dropout" will probably continue to be used simply because of convenience. It is the term used throughout this paper. Still, one must keep in mind that the term carries a long list of implications included among which are (but not limited to) the following:

- The student is at fault;
- The student left entirely by choice;
- Parents are partly to blame;
- The student's culture does not value education;
- The student is a loser;

- The school is blameless;
- The choice is irremediable.

All, of course, are incorrect; but the final one is perhaps the most perniciouss because it limits the possibility of success in the future.

-- John Ponciano
Holland, Michigan
August 19, 1989

The greatest problem facing America's Hispanic youth today is the "dropout" predicament. The dropout rate among Hispanics in the United States is at an all-time high. It is the single greatest problem facing Hispanic youth, probably more urgent even than AIDS, teen pregnancy, poverty, drugs, crime and other innumerable negatives inextricably related to education.

It is the contention of this paper that the educational establishment is largely to blame for the dropout problem among Hispanics. Education in general has chosen to overlook and ignore its Hispanics even though for years their problems have repeatedly been highlighted by innumerable reports. We are in the dire situation of the present because education officials at all levels -- local, state, and federal -- have in the past failed to heed the warnings of things to come. And what has happened in the past is nothing compared to what may happen in the future if no steps are taken soon to rectify the situation. In spite of many needs, and many options open to them, the schools still choose to do nothing. This paper makes recommendations for action at all levels. State and federal officials are partly to blame for the situation, although the brunt of the blame must fall on officials at the local level since they control how education is delivered.

For minorities generally and Hispanics specifically the condition of education in America is appaling. The schools are failing everybody, but for what minorities get out of education generally, they might more profitably spend their time elsewhere. In fact, education serves them so poorly, the longer they remain in classrooms the further behind they get. Ironic, yes, but time spent in American public schools is actually detrimental to them: the schools actually make them regress.

American public education is on the verge of total collapse; but for minorities it is at an even worse predicament, for the schools are doing a poorer job than they have ever done. Indeed, the structure of public education today is to serve only the White middle class. Because of all these reasons many writers are calling for a complete dismantling of the system. All students are being failed -- even those lucky enough to make it to graduation.

Why -- and how -- has Education become the direct opposite of what it was originally intended to be? It should have become the great equalizer; yet from the beginning some students are formally and informally tagged as losers (in some instances <u>before</u> they enter school) -- and they usually

live up to the expectation. The tragedy is that in American schools there are so few winners. There are indeed losers in the classrooms: the personnel who have hate in their hearts, who work to make their negative expectations a reality, who work to push students out of classrooms and out of schools. How could this have happened to teachers? What happened to the dedicated hard-working consumate educators who once populated our classrooms and cared deeply for all their students

The educational establishment has in general not been concerned about its minorities, ignoring them as though they did not exist. The system instead has constructed a sieve through which minorities can fall easily and easily be discarded. It is a planned thinning out so that only the chosen few selected by the system make it to the top of the success pyramid. The following are odious givens within such a structure:

- discourage self-confidence of minorities;
- belittle any program designed to help them;
- vocally support racist practices and policies;
- refuse appropriate guidance, counseling, tutoring and/or other needed services;
- perpetuate stereotypes;
- oppose cultural programs and activities;
- refuse to recognize the realities of the times;
- mis-use testing for tracking purposes or for placement of minorities in low-level classes;
- place little or no value on students' cultures
- work in a vaccuum;
- professional personnel become alienated from certain segments of the student population.

Given the above, it must be considered that Hispanics are dropping out at such staggering rates because <u>that</u> is exactly what the educational establishment has planned. In fact, dropout rates have increased during the past 20 and 30 years where one would have expected the exact opposite. And the figures continue to escalate, yet the educational estab-

lishment makes no effort to change those ever spiraling statistics.

Everyone in the educational establishment shares the blame for the predicament of Hispanic dropouts: teachers and administrators, local boards of education, State Boards of Education, and the Department of Education. All have been aware of the problem for years yet have chosen to do little or nothing. Michigan is one of the states that have little in place -- if anything -- to alleviate the problems its Hispanics experience in schools. In fact, Michigan ranks at the bottom of all the states in its Hispanic dropout statistics. It is the duty of the State Board of Education to take a long overdue stance in the matter.

The condition of minority dropouts in American schools can be likened to the AIDS epidemic: no one paid much attention or cared while the epidemic affected only a certain segment of the population: Hispanics and other minorities. But now the dropout problem has become a White middle class problem too; the disease has spread to all of education, and <u>everyone</u> is at risk: today what plagues Hispanics plagues all students.

There is no consensus on the true statistics of Hispanic dropouts. Most documents claim that only 50% remain in school long enough to receive a diploma. Hodgkinson places the figure at 60% but others are not so optimistic. And in some metropolitan areas it is as low as 10 or 15%. Regardless of the actual graduation rate, the value of the diploma must be questioned if students have been shortchanged by the public schools.

Things may become more alarming as Hispanics increase in the schools, as is presently being predicted. Because Hispanics tend to be young, the majority is just entering child-bearing age. It is predicted that by 1990 schools will be 30% minority and that by 2020 that figure will reach 48%. The vast majority of the total group will continue to be Hispanic.

The condition of Hispanics in Michigan public schools may be worse than in the country as a whole. A 1986 report by the Michigan State Board of Education claimed that public school Hispanics in Michigan drop out at three or four times the rate of non-Hispanic Whites -- <u>and that the problem had worsened in recent years</u>. The dropout rate for Hispanics in the report was placed at 47% or higher. The rate could reach as high as 55%. But no action has been taken, and three years have passed. The Michigan State Board of Education has clearly chosen to give low priority to the problem of dropouts; because the majority is Hispanic it can be seen that the Michigan SBE considers Hispanics second class citizens.

While the common term in schools nowadays is "alienation", for Hispanics it is not merely alienation but racism. For Hispanics the schools are but one more indecia of racism in a long list of practices designed to prevent their entry into the mainstream. The schools like the society at large and like our other institutions, formal and informal alike, are pervaded by an entrenched, ubiquitous and undeniable racism.

The question to be asked is why racism has succeeded so well in American public schools when education was supposed to be the soil where racism would not flourish; yet in education racism seems to have found its finest fertile fields. This situation is doubly disturbing because education is in the hands of teachers and administrators educated at the great educational institutions of this country. If teachers were originally supposed to be dedicated and committed to educating their students, how have Hispanics ended up on the periphery of the educational pie? How have teachers and the entire educational establishment turned against Hispanics? The racism practiced by educators is odious and destructive because its perpetrators are so educated and in a profession that depends on commitment. Instead, their education appears to have taught them to develop a subtle, almost undetectable form of racism, an in situ component that has become a part of the education structure. It is certainly obvious and undeniable in the alarming number of Hispanics who leave school each year.

While racism forces students out, many Hispanic students in the past have overcome the same or similar situations; many who graduated did not have to suffer their individual calamaties and racism. There is little doubt that racism existed in the past -- but not to the degree it exists today. When Hispanics run away from their schools today it is that racism that they are escaping, not education. If there were no racism -- or even if it existed to a lesser degree -- Hispanics might more easily and with more success confront and overcome many of the other problems that plague them.

Teachers practice racism in the classroom; they help little if at all, and they instill in Hispanic students a negative self-concept that even if they drop out of school, they will carry with them -- and continuing failure is thereby ensured. If only teachers were racist many more Hispanics might survive. But racism has been built into the foundation of the educational system; there are also racist administrators, secretaries, janitors, and cafeteria workers. All must change -- or be changed -- for Hispanics to be successful in school.

Supervisors, administrators and central office personnel are in a particularly sensitive position in terms of

the racism in their schools. Often times they inadvertently give subtle hints that racism is permitted. If they themselves are racist they set the tone and mood in the entire school and thus legitimize what subordinates do. Racist or not, people in command often look askance at practices that take place in classrooms thereby giving tacit approval of unacceptable actions. In this way a more virulent form of racism spreads throughout the institution to include the staff, secretaries, nurses, custodians, and cafeteria workers.

For Hispanics to succeed in public school there must be a program of preparing all employees to work with minorities. This should be a formal, on-going program that becomes a concomitant of yearly inservice training. Over a three year period all employees in a school should have received training; at that point, the training should start over. Suggestions are made later in this paper on including everyone in the training processs.

But how does racism become entrenched in American public education? How does it become so pervasive? Why is it almost impossible to detect? Where does it originate and how does it spread? How does it survive?

Even when students enter pre-school or kindergarden, already they are met with negativism not only because of their dark skins but sometimes because of their language, their clothes, and other personal things. Indeed, some teachers pre-judge Hispanics by their names <u>before students have entered the classroom</u>! Already the educational establishment is prepared to expect less, assume there is no home and family support, and to move to instill in students feelings of inferiority or incompetence. This continues throughout elementary education until students come to believe many of these negatives. Teachers give Hispanics less attention, have fewer interactions with them, often do not call on them in classrooms; students are placed in low groups based on teachers' opinions, home contact is not made as often as for non-minority students, and Hispanic parents are made to feel unwelcome when contacting schools. Slowly students begin to feel negative about themselves -- they become passive; they begin to live up to the expectations of their teachers and of the system.

As students enter middle and junior high school there is a change; they become aware on a conscious level of negative attitudes, and this further affects their self-esteem. They feel -- accurately, of course -- that teachers are uncaring, avoid them, and often do not even recognize them in the halls or the classroom; they become "non-persons"; the chasm between educator and student grows wider.

On entering high school, the problems are further compounded. Now Hispanics realize what the system is doing to them; they feel left out, that they are not participants, that they are unwanted. They participate less and less in educational endeavors and almost not at all in extra-curricular activities. The educational establishment now judges them as having no interest in their education. At this level. Spanish teachers rate the language of Hispanics as inferior, ungrammatical, inappropriate; in the extreme, they say Hispanics speak neither Spanish nor English! Many have by now failed subjects, others are a year or two behind their peers. (We are told that students behind one year stand a 50% chance of dropping out; for students behind two years, the percentage jumps to an extraordinary 90%).

By now the entire system has turned against Hispanics so that they realize the cards are stacked against them. There is little reason to try: They see the injustice of grade distribution; they get fEW A's and B's but a disproportionate number of C's and D's (even in Spanish classes!) They see the re-institution of the illegal dual school system in which they and other minorities are sent one way and the selected elite go another. They see segregation take place in everything -- testing, class and teacher assignment, extracurricular activities, athletics, awards and honors. They see themselves in low-track, low level, non-academic subjects; more and more such classes are almost totally populated by others like them. Little wonder, then, that in such an atmosphere many simply give up. Their frustration reaches the point where it is detrimental to remain in school. When they drop out, ironically -- and miraculously -- it is reported that their self-confidence is higher than for those who remain!

The great irony for Hispanics in high school exists in Spanish classes, where there should be a predisposition for success. Yet more Hispanics are victimized in Spanish classes than in any other single class. Hispanics students come to these classes pre-disposed to success, although they do not know this and Spanish teachers would deny it. Spanish teachers are adept enough to realize the potential for success and move quickly to eliminate it. The pattern established in the class is as follows: Hispanics get low and failing grades; non-Hispanics who do not learn the language and who can neither speak nor understand the spoken word get A's and B's.

In other classes there is an isolation of students that is in reality a subtle segregation so a certain group of them (and teachers) move through a school day without coming in. contact with minority students.

Spanish classes are planned not so that all learn Span-

ish but to ensure that Hispanics fail or get low grades, to make previously held expectations of inferiority come true. The Spanish teachers can then say, "You see -- I told you so." Previous to this the Spanish teachers have campaigned against Hispanics, denigrating their families and cultures, their Spanish and English, and ensuring failure or low grades.

This paper makes some very specific recommendations in the body of the document and includes in Appendix I a proposal that makes more definite recommendations. Included are recommendations on such things as inservice, parent involvement, changes in student teacher training, recruitment, structural changes in Spanish classes, and counseling services.

It is repeatedly emphasized in the research that most teachers and other personnel in the public schools are unprepared to teach Hispanics and other students from diversified backgrounds. Teachers who feel unable to help such students will not automatically develop positive attitudes toward them; on the contrary, such teachers are unwilling to change and instead concentrate on transfer or removal of such students. We cannot expect school personnel on their own to learn to work with minority students. It is natural that such teachers feel frustrated with such students in classrooms. In general, White middle class teachers were trained (and expect) to teach White middle class students. What Education must do is to instill in such teachers the desire to learn, to change racist attitudes, to know that a willingness to help is the foundation of the teaching profession and a step toward growth for teacher and student alike. Teachers, like the educational establishment, are hesitant to change; they are comfortable with the status quo. The unknown is fearful for everyone; and everyone fears being considered incompetent. The approach to the training of such teachers must emphasize improvement, new knowledge, and making the classroom experience easier for all concerned -- including teachers.

Inservice should be provided to all employees of a district, from the superintendent and his staff to all administrators, teachers, secretaries, cafeteria and maintenance personnel, nurses, social workers, psychologists, and any other specialists offering services within the schools. In general, the literature recommends inservice only for teachers and counselors because of their prime role in the delivery of education. But other personnel should not be overlooked. The whole purpose of the training is to improve the climate of the school; this cannot be done by concentrating only on one segment of those employed in the schools. Once the climate is improved, all students will profit from the new

and more positive environment, not only Hispanics and other minorities.

Any dropout reduction or prevention plan must be accompanied by a strong parent support system centered in the home. All the research recommends parent participation and support in the restructuring of the educational system. But parents are almost always hesitant to participate in any aspect of schooling because they themselves feel alienated either because they are products of the educational system themselves or, worse, because they have been made unwelcome. Schools often give the appearance of not wanting parents to participate (though all say the opposite), and they are poorer at making Hispanic parents feel welcomed. At any rate, whatever is done for Hispanics in the schools will be a failure if it does not intimately include active parent involvement.

## Recommendations

These recommendations are independent of those made in the The Proposal, which is appended to this document as Appendix I. It is recommended that:

1) The Governor of Michigan appoint a permanent task force specifically to study further the problems and paradoxes of Hispanic dropouts in the state;

2) By 1990 the Governor of Michigan send a letter to the President encouraging a national conference to attack the problem of dropouts in the country; the conference would be chaired by the Secretary of Education;

3) A plan (The Proposal of Appendix I) be presented to the Michigan State Board of Education;

4) Community Based Organizations be contacted to see how they might help in the delivery of education to Hispanics and other minorities in the state;

5) Alternate (and untried) systems of education be sought for the education of Hispanics and minorities (Alternative schools, magnet schools, etc.)

## Conclusion

What will save Hispanics? Teachers and classrooms must be filled with love and caring and concern -- for all. A foundation built on these criteria can develop in students

the necessary positive self-concept to last a lifetime and can help turn around students who are already failure prone. But love and caring cannot be mandated, nor can concern. If teachers cannot or will not accept such a commitment perhaps they should re-examine their purpose for remaining in the classroom. From faculty should be demanded unconditional love, unconditional commitment, unconditional caring. While neutral teachers may not be the ideal to strive for, they may be preferable to negative ones. It is doubtful that old dogs can be taught new tricks; it is doubtful that entrenched racists can be changed very much. While some retraining is proposed for teachers, the possibility of success is probably slim at best. We should try it nonetheless.

One alternative is to concentrate on students presently in teacher training institutions: we would probably fare much better at that level where, in general, students are willing to learn, want to know about working with minorities, and have no pre-conceived ideas. They must learn that in the end we all succeed together or we all fail together; and success is the much more appealing outcome for all.

Can we reach the promised land? Probably not, but that should not preclude our attempting the journey. The alternative is unthinkable. We must not let the present defeat us. America's success stories are replete with defeats, failures, regression. These can be stepping stones to ultimate overall success. Following glorious failures should come glorious successes. The 1990's must become the decade of recommitment to the education of <u>all</u> students, of an increased graduation rate for Hispanics and other minorities, and an increase in Hispanic and other minority representation on faculty and staff, and a definite decrease in all forms of racism.

While the substance of this paper has generally been pessimistic and has pointed out myriads of negatives -- is there yet reason for hope? Yes, a resounding yes. There exists in the Hispanic community a belief that as bad as things may be, there is hope for change. And there is the strength of the culture and heritage, which gives an inordinate amount of support. There is the support of parents and families too, who want the best for their children.

The question remains, with so much negativism how can Hispanics survive in America's racist educational system? Dr. James Vasquez says Hispanic children are resilient in the war; he suggests they internalize a duality that in the end may be their salvation. He says Hispanic students perceive themselves as having the makeup of two beings within their personality: "me-as-person" and "me-as-student". He

posits the idea that while schools may destroy the "student-hood" of such individuals the "person-hood" is left intact; that students survive on their perceptions of themselves as whole persons regardless of what happens to them as students in the killing fields of the educational arena -- that there exists a part that cannot be destroyed. Thus, there is yet hope that we can salvage these students, because while they may have given up on themselves as students they have not given up on themselves as persons -- and from there we can build a foundation of self-esteem, academic achivements, future success, and the beginning of a new age in education.

Hispanics have the potential for success; through their veins runs the blood of advanced civilizations that predate the arrival of Europeans in the Western Hemisphere. They are an intelligent people with a long history of struggle and success -- although in public education these are minimized, if recognized at all. Hispanics have always valued education (although the educational system has never learned this) -- they want to learn, to be successful, to contribute, to participate, to gain quality and equality, to be given opportunity. They demand the opportunity. America certainly owes them as much. For America's public education system to refuse to take appropriate and drastically needed action at this time is to make of America a mockery and of education a sham.

Appendix I

## THE PROPOSAL

This proposal is predicated on the idea that steps must be taken at the highest levels of the state educational system to take drastic and specific measures to turn around the well-known dropout rate among Hispanics, a tragic condition in which many of our youth are inextricably locked.

## THE PLAN

### First Year

The State Board of Education establishes a reporting system in which school districts of Michigan at the end of each school year file a report on the number of Hispanic dropouts. Included in the information would be reasons for dropping out. Name of the students, parent(S)/guardian(s) and a forwarding address would all be required.

### Second Year

The State Board of Education would do a followup mailing to confirm dropout information provided by districts. Reason for dropping out would be requested. Students who actually drop out rather than transferring to another school would receive a letter from the Governor or Mr. Bemis emphasizing the enormity and seriousness of the decision and encouraging either returning to school or seeking an alternative route to completing the education process.

### Third and Succeeding Years

For school districts with ___% (5-10) or more Hispanics and a dropout rate higher than the majority population, districts would be required to institute a program to reduce the dropout rate among Hispanics. On an annuaal basis districts would be required to report the positive steps being taken to attempt to reduce the dropout rate. In sum, districts would be required to do something and would spell out that something for the State Board.

Districts with ___% (15-20??) Hispanic populations would, if the dropout rate is high, be required to appoint a staff member to be in charge of a dropout prevention program.

Throughout the Plan

Throughout the plan the SBE would attempt to improve the quality of education for Hispanics within the classroom. The following are specific examples where improvement is particularly imperative.

**Staff Inservice/Training** -- The SBE would require districts to implement a Plan of Improvement to include the minimum of one half-day inservice training or workshops for **all** employees (from the superintendent to the secretaries, custodians and lunchroom personnel) on the development of sensitivity to working with non-traditional students. (Examples: multicultural sensitivity; formal courses, workshops or inservices concentrating on educating minority students, low socioeconomic students, and/or Limited English-proficient (LEP) students; courses on languages and culture; language acquisition; linguistics and sociolinguistics; workshops on unlearning racism, among others).

**Student Teaching** -- For certification in the state of Michigan the SBE would require an exposure to working with at-risk students in the formal student teaching process. The pre-student teaching experience would include a minimum of three semester hours in one of the subjects listed above.

**Spanish Classes** -- Because of the **ironic rate of failure** of Hispanics in Spanish classes, the SBE would require that districts improve the variety and quality of classes. This will come about if the SBE requires districts to provide options or specific selections geared to Spanish-for-the-Spanish-speaking. The emphasis would be on advanced skills in communication and literature. Any or all of the following are areas for improvement: a) emphasis on Spanish of the Western Hemisphere; recruitment of native-speaking teachers for advanced courses; improvement of quality of teaching by requiring specific courses beyond the traditional certification requirements. This should include some of the following: bilingual methodology; linguistics and sociolinguistics; history of the Spanish language; Spanish dialects of the Americas; teaching Spanish to Spanish-speaking students; courses on working with or motivating the non-traditional student.

**Recruitment of Hispanic Administrators, Teachers, and Non-certified Staff** -- Recruitment of Hispanics in the public schools of Michigan should be a primary goal for the SBE. While the recruitment of Hispanics is of importance, the schools should also recruit non-Hispanics sensitive to the problems of Hispanic and non-traditional students. Role models are needed for Hispanic students but, more important, they can be role models for administration, faculty and staff who need to observe role models of Hispanic backgrounds to change their racist attitudes. The ratio of Hispanics on a faculty should reflect the ratio of Hispanics in the community. The SBE might offer monetary incentives to encourage the hiring of Hispanics. The following is one possible plan: 1st year, 75% of salary; 2nd

year, 50% of salary; 3rd year, 25% of salary. Employees by the 4th year would be on tenure with the salary entirely paid by the local school district.

**Counseling Services** -- Incentives would be offered by the SBE to encourage districts to hire Hispanic and other-minority counselors. The SBE should require coursework in working with minority and non-traditional students for certification in Michigan. For counselors already certified, annual course-work or workshops on working with the at-risk student should be required.

**Parent Component** --A strong parent component must be included in any plan to reduce dropouts. Efforts should include parent education, introduction and study of the educational system, general knowledge about the structure of the actual school. Particular efforts should be made to actively involve parents and to make them feel welcome and wanted.

Appendix II

# *The Bare Facts*

1. The majority of Hispanics enter high school with educational and career aspirations as high as any other group in our society.
2. Forty percent of all Hispanic students who leave school do so *before* reaching the 10th grade and 25 percent of Hispanics who enter high school are over-age.
3. Forty-five percent of Mexican American and Puerto Rican students who enter high school never finish, compared to 17 percent of Anglo students.
4. Hispanics are the youngest and the fastest growing population group in the nation.
5. As the general population ages, Hispanics will become the majority of the school population in many cities and a rising percentage of the population in many other parts of the nation. The future and prosperity of these communities and the United States itself will be correspondingly related to the development and progress of their Hispanic families.
6. The Hispanic population in the United States is composed of distinct groups who come from Mexico, the Caribbean, Central America, South America, and Spain. There are great diversities within and among these groups, but in a number of respects, their overall statistics can be distinguished from other groups in the U.S. population.
7. Hispanics are the most highly urbanized population in the United States. Eighty-five percent of Hispanics, 66 percent of Anglos, and 76 percent of Blacks reside in metropolitan areas.
8. Hispanics are highly concentrated. Seventy percent live in five states—California, Florida, Illinois, New York, and Texas.
9. Most poor Hispanics live in segregated neighborhoods in deteriorating inner cities.
10. Over two-thirds of all Hispanics attend schools with student bodies that are more than 50 percent minority.
11. Schools that Hispanics attend usually are overcrowded, or are poorly equipped, or have lower per-pupil budgets than other schools in adjacent areas.
12. Hispanics experience a high rate of poverty—38.2 percent for youth under 18, compared to 17.3 percent for Anglos.
13. Hispanic males work more hours per week while attending school than does any other group.
14. Despite the economic difficulties of many, Hispanics constituted a 70-billion-dollar market in 1983.
15. While many Hispanics have found success in rewarding jobs and professions, a disproportionate number have not: Unemployment is 40 to 50 percent higher than for Anglos. Many Hispanics are marginally employed or under employed.
16. Many Hispanic students suffer high levels of stress as a consequence of poverty, culture clashes, and the marginal, often violent quality of life in the inner city.

-- from Make Something Happen: Hispanics and Urban High School Reform, Vol. 1, National Commission on Secondary Education for Hispanics, p. 10.



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Appendix III

## A Multiethnic Evaluation Checklist

| *Criteria Questions* | *Rating* | | |
|---|---|---|---|
| | *Strongly* ← | | → *Hardly at All* |
| 1. Does school policy reflect the ethnic diversity in American society? | | | |
| 2. Is the total school culture (including the hidden curriculum) multiethnic and multiracial? | | | |
| 3. Do the learning styles favored by the school reflect the learning styles of the students? | | | |
| 4. Does the school reflect and sanction the range of languages and dialects spoken by the students and within the larger society? | | | |
| 5. Does the school involve parents from diverse ethnic groups in school activities, programs, and planning? | | | |
| 6. Does the counseling program of the school reflect the ethnic diversity in American society? | | | |
| 7. Are the testing procedures used by the school multiethnic and ethnically fair? | | | |
| 8. Are instructional materials examined for ethnic and racial bias? | | | |
| 9. Are the formalized curriculum and course of study multiethnic and multiracial? Do they help students to view events, situations, and concepts from diverse ethnic perspectives and points of view? | | | |
| 10. Do the teaching styles and motivational systems in the school reflect the ethnic diversity of the student body? | | | |
| 11. Are the attitudes, perceptions, beliefs, and behavior of the total school staff ethnically and racially sensitive? | | | |
| 12. Does the school have systematic, comprehensive, mandatory, and continuing multiethnic staff development programs? | | | |
| 13. Is the school staff (administrative, instructional, counseling, and supportive) multiethnic and multiracial? | | | |
| 14. Is the total atmosphere of the school positively responsive to racial, ethnic, and language differences? | | | |
| 15. Do school assemblies and holidays reflect the ethnic and racial diversity in American society? | | | |
| 16. Does the school lunch program prepare meals that reflect the range of ethnic foods eaten in the United States? | | | |
| 17. Do the bulletin boards, physical education program, music, and other displays and activities in the school reflect ethnic and racial pluralism? | | | |

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